CHAPTER 3

The Evolution of Physical Activity Philosophies and Programs

Questions

- **In what ways has physical education changed throughout history?**
- **At what point did fitness evolve from its relationship to work and survival to becoming part of the developmental or recreational process?**
- **What are the precipitating cultural issues that seem to influence the degree of attention to fitness and physical activity?**

Objectives

- **Explore the development and evolution of philosophies toward physical activity and physical fitness.**
  - **Hunter-gatherer**
  - **Military**
  - **Sport**
  - **Leisure**
  - **Health**
- **Discuss how gender, race, ethnicity, and socioeconomic class affect individuals' physical activity opportunities.**

Gymnastics Philosophies and Systems

- **European nationalism created a desire for a strong military.**
  - **Developing strength and endurance**
- **Emphasis on gymnastics training increased.**
  - **Jumping, running, throwing, vaulting**
- **Immigrants brought European systems to the United States.**
- **The first truly American physical education program was in 1861.**
  - **Physical development measured over time**
  - **Foundation for modern, progressive programs**

Emergence of Physical Activity in American Physical Education

- **Forming of the Association for the Advancement of Physical Education**
  - **Place to learn how to be a physical trainer and teacher**
  - **Opportunity to discuss and share ideas**
- **Teacher preparation programs developed at universities**
  - **Physical education as part of education and not medicine**
  - **Holistic approach to combining physical literacy with individual, environmental, and cultural wellness**
- **Shift from gymnastics to a more comprehensive approach**

Evolution of American Physical Education

- **An article published in 1954 showed that American youths trailed European youths in muscular fitness.**
  - **Led to formation of President's Youth Fitness Council to improve state of American physical education and fitness**
- **Modern physical education programs have shifted away from traditional fitness development to lifestyle activities.**
  - **Public health concerns about hypokinetic diseases**
- **Victorian concept of women was challenged in the early 20th century.**
  - **Women became more educated and physically active**
  - **Title IX legislation required equal access**

Prehistoric Humans

- **Early humans**
  - **Hunter-gatherers: daily physical activity vital for survival**
  - **Persistence hunting evolved cardiorespiratory system**
  - **Long-distance foraging and migrations**
  - **Egalitarian; everyone contributed**

- **Agricultural revolution**
  - **Domestication of plants and animals**
  - **Reduced need for physical activity**
  - **Separation of labor: merchant versus farmer**

Ancient Civilizations

- **Early Chinese civilization was likely the first to recognize the importance of physical activity for health.**
  - **Martial arts, gymnastics, dance**

- **Ancient Greek and Roman civilizations emphasized physical development.**
  - **Military training**
  - **Aesthetics**
  - **Ancient Olympics**

Emergence of Fitness

- **Physical activity shifted from a survival mechanism to a symbol of national pride and individual vigor.**
- **World wars highlighted the need for fitness in every person.**
- **Physical fitness emerged as an industry in the 1970s (private health clubs, aerobic classes, jogging, bodybuilding).**
- **A large emphasis was placed on developing physical fitness in schools and communities; need for qualified personnel increased kinesiology/exercise science enrollment.**

Emergence of Organized Sport in America

- **The late 19th/early 20th century: Formalization of sports; the foundation for modern versions of popular sports.**
- **Women were actively involved in the evolution of American sporting culture for girls and women.**
  - **Title IX expanded access; however, challenges within women's sports still exist and persist.**
  - **Female coaches are judged more harshly than male counterparts.**
  - **The NCAA has a relatively equal number of female athletes but much fewer female athletic directors and coaches.**
- **First the emergence of radio and then television greatly increased interest in sport.**

Sport on College Campuses

- **Students drove the rapid rise in sport on college campuses.**
- **Formal administration was required to ensure safety and financial security for sport organizations.**
- **Creation of athletic conferences regulated participation and compensation of student-athletes.**
- **Early challenges still seen today.**
  - **Eligibility of athletes**
  - **Financial gain of university at the expense of student-athletes**

Sport During the Depression, World War II, and Beyond

- **Sport participation changed due to the Depression and World War II.**
  - **Shift away from spectating to participating**
  - **Increased participation of youths and families**
- **Participation and attendance in organized sport decreased during World War II.**
- **Opportunities/access expanded after World War II: Civil rights, gender equality, Americans with Disabilities Act.**
- **Environmental awareness increased outdoor recreation.**

Philosophical Influences in American Physical Education

- **European gymnastics and national patriotism influenced early American physical education (individual vigor versus national pride).**
- **The Puritan ideal shifted toward Muscular Christianity: Develop mental, physical, moral, and religious piety through sport.**
- **Ralph Waldo Emerson (philosopher): Proper development of young men must include physical pursuits.**

Emergence of Physical Activity for Girls and Women

- **Muscular Christianity and Victorian traditions placed greater emphasis on men's activities; women were to uphold "feminine virtues."**
- **Vigorous exercise was thought to be dangerous and inappropriate for women.**
- **The process of increasing opportunities for girls and women, particularly in more vigorous activities, was slow.**
- **Title IX (1972) created a framework for more equal access.**

Recent Philosophical Influences on Physical Activity

- **Environmental movement**
  - Engaging in activity outdoors and in nature
  - Adventure education and lifetime pursuits
- **Civil rights movement**
  - Desegregation of schools and integration of Black athletes and participants
- **Fitness and wellness movement**
  - Commercial fitness industry
  - Increases in recreational cycling and running
  - Created need for educated professional coaches and trainers

Activity

- **Discuss how physical education in America changed from its earliest forms to its current forms.**
  - **From 18th → 19th → 20th centuries**
- **Discuss how cultural issues influence the degree of attention and access to physical activity and fitness.**
- **Describe the process for the changing emphasis of sport and fitness for girls and women.**

Summary

- **Early American physical activity systems developed from European systems, but gradually changed to focus on physical fitness and sport.**
- **Physical activity for girls and women evolved slowly until the passage of Title IX in 1972.**
- **The 1964 Civil Rights Act finally allowed for equal participation for African Americans and other racial and ethnic groups.**
- **Tasks/Assignments:**
- **Next Class:**